Conversion of roads into NHs in Assam

299. SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the length of State roads in the State of Assam converted to National Highways during last four years;

(b) the specific State roads in the State converted into National Highways during the current financial year and proposed to be converted during the next two financial years; and

(c) the amount that has been earmarked for conversion of State roads into NHs in the State of Assam?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) to (c) No new National Highway has been declared in Assam during the last four years. At present, emphasis is being given for development of roads already declared as National Highways instead of declaring more roads as National Highways. No separate funds are earmarked for declaration of new National Highways.

Four-Laning works on NH-31

300. SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of work completed for four-laning of Highway on NH-31 so far;

(b) the details of work pending and the reasons therefor;

(c) by when this project is likely to be completed;

(d) the reasons for not maintaining the road from Pathsala town to Bijni which is in quite dilapidated condition for more than a year and which was supposed to be maintained by NHAI; and

(e) by when can we expect a permanent arrangement in place of the Brailey Bridge between Howli and Bhawanipur, which has been there for a long time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) to (c) The four-laning work of NH-31, which is part of East-West Corridor is in progress at various stages. The original alignment of East-West Corridor from km 565 to 634 of NH-31 had to be changed, as it was passing through Wild Life Sanctuaries, thereby adversely affecting the progress of the work, mainly due to delay in land acquisition, relocation of utilities, cutting of trees, forest clearance, ban on hill cutting and poor law & order situation in the State of Assam. Target is now to complete the 4-laning of NH-31, which is part of East-West Corridor, substantially by December 2009, except the stretches under modified alignment, which are expected to be completed by year 2012.

(d) NH-31 was badly damaged from Pathsala to Bijni due to overtopping caused by flash floods resulting in collapse of a RCC Bridge and road breaches at 8 locations. A Baliey Bridge was launched at the location of the collapsed bridge and a diversion was also constructed to maintain traffic. The breaches have already been plugged by providing

Hume pipes. The area surrounding the stretches was inundated, with flow of water causing further damages to the road, making maintenance work impossible. However, now the road has been repaired to make it traffic worthy.

(e) The permanent bridge is likely to be completed simultaneously with 4-laning of NH-31 in this section.

Four-laning of NH-9 in Andhra Pradesh

301. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the status of the proposal of the State Government of Andhra Pradesh for four-laning of 16.3 Km stretch of NH-9 between Sangareddy and Zahirabad and construction of 17 bridges on this stretch;

(b) the reasons for delay in giving clearance to this proposal; and

(c) by when it is likely to be given clearance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) to (c) Sangareddy-Zahirabad section ofNH-9 in Andhra Pradesh is having a length of 53 Kms. The consultancy services for examining the viability of 4/6 laning of this stretch on Design, Build, Finance and Operate (DBFO) pattern in under progress. Further action in the matter will depend upon the outcome of the said study.

Satellite for studying the Sun

302. SHRIMATI N. P. DURGA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ISRO is planning to launch a satellite called Aditya to sutdy the Sun:

(b) the details of studies that Aditya is going to carry out; and

(c) to what extent the proposed study by Aditya helps ISRO's satellites from the vagaries of solar phenomena?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) ADITYA will carry an instrument intended to study the outmost region of the sun called corona. It will also study the coronnal mass enjection and the crucial physical parameters of space weather, such as, the coronal magnetic field structures and evolution of the coronal magnetic field.

(c) The mission is intended to enhance the scientific knowledge of the Sun's radiation and the continuous monitoring of the Sun's atmosphere. This data will also help to design the satellites to withstand adverse effects of Solar environment.

Launching of foreign satellilte by ISRO

303. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a foreign satellite was launched by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to garner a share in the multi-billion global satellite launch market;